

2020

## LIFTING THE VEIL: HIJBABI FASHION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Erika Holshoe  
*University of Rhode Island, eholshoe@uri.edu*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/theses>

---

### Recommended Citation

Holshoe, Erika, "LIFTING THE VEIL: HIJBABI FASHION ON SOCIAL MEDIA" (2020). *Open Access Master's Theses*. Paper 1896.  
<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/theses/1896>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu).

LIFTING THE VEIL:  
HIJBABI FASHION ON SOCIAL MEDIA  
BY  
ERIKA HOLSHOE

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF SCIENCE  
IN  
TEXTILES, FASHION MERCHANDISING, AND DESIGN

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

2020

MASTER OF SCIENCE

OF

ERIKA HOLSHOE

APPROVED:

Thesis Committee:

Major Professor      Karl Aspelund

Jessica Strübel

Cheryl Foster

Hilda Llorèns

Nasser H. Zawia

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

2020

## **ABSTRACT**

As visual representatives of Islam, diasporic Muslim women in the U.S. and U.K. are at the forefront of changing the perception of Islam and the rise of modest fashion. The aim of this study is to analyze how female Muslim social media influencers living in non-Muslim majority areas use fashionable apparel on social media to negotiate cultural and religious demands in conjunction with exploration of personal identities. Social media posts from Instagram were coded using grounded theory. The findings were analyzed using Netnographic methods and Social Representation Theory (SRT) as the main theoretical framework. This study found that Muslim social media influencers are changing both the meaning and styling of the hijab to suite their personal needs and exemplify their identities. The identities of these influencers were found to be multifaceted and unique, but used dress to balance between cultures and religious expectations. The hijab was found to be less of a symbol of religious devotion, and more of a symbol of cultural heritage in a culturally diverse area whose narratives of Islam are in discussion.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to the people whose assistance made this project possible. First and foremost, I am most grateful to my thesis advisor, Dr. Karl Aspelund, for his outstanding guidance, support and patience throughout the duration of my project. I would like to thank Dr. Jessica Strübel for her willingness to provide guidance and expertise.

The professors and staff of the Textile, Fashion Merchandising and Design Department have provided unending gracious support in all of my academic endeavors. I wish to give sincere thanks to Rebecca Kelly for always lending an ear and going above and beyond to provide rigorous academic instruction and professional guidance to myself and all of the graduate students. Dr. Linda Welters and Dr. Susan Hannel for their exceptional departmental leadership. Bethany Fay for keeping the department running smoothly.

I would like to show my sincere appreciation to the members of my committee, Dr. Jessica Strübel, Dr. Hilda Llorèns and Dr. Cheryl Foster for their enthusiastic engagement with this project.

A big thanks must also be given to Noor Tagouri and Rizqi Mohammad, who graciously allowed me to use their fashion images from social media as a part of this project.

Lastly, I'd like to thank my family for enduring my daily quarter-life crises, my peers for hallway chats and late-night study parties, and my cat – the esteemed Miss Kitty- for healing snuggles.

## **PREFACE**

This thesis is written using Manuscript Format.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>PREFACE.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>MANUSCRIPT -1 .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	2
<b>CHAPTER 2 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	5
<b>CHAPTER 3 .....</b>	<b>18</b>
METHODOLOGY .....	18
<b>CHAPTER 4 .....</b>	<b>24</b>
FINDINGS .....	24
<b>CHAPTER 5 .....</b>	<b>36</b>
CONCLUSION .....	36
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>45</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS .....	24
Table 2. MODESTY LEVEL.....	25
Table 3. HIJAB STYLE .....	26
Table 4. USE OF TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC DRESS.....	28
Table 5. TRAVEL.....	30
Table 6. SPONSORSHIP.....	31
Table 7. RELIGION .....	32
Table 8. SOCIO-POLITICAL ADVOCACY .....	33
Table 9. FAMILY .....	34



## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 1. Illustration of a standard hijab style .....	7
Figure 2. Illustration of a Shayla style hijab. ....	7
Figure 3. Illustration of a Niqab face veil.....	8
Figure 4. Illustration of a Burka.....	8
Figure 5. Instagram user @noor wearing a blue baseball hat on top of her yellow turban at a New York Fashion Week event.....	28
Figure 6. Instagram user @riskemohammad wearing a Shayla with blue jeans, sneakers and a blazer.....	36

**MANUSCRIPT – 1**

Published for submission to the University of Rhode Island, May 2020.

**Lifting the Veil: Hijabi Fashion on Social Media**

Erika Holshoe

Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design, University of Rhode Island, Kingston,  
RI, USA

Corresponding Author: Erika Holshoe  
Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design  
University of Rhode Island  
Ballentine Hall, 7 Lippit Rd.  
Kingston, RI, 02881, USA  
Email address: [eholshoe@uri.edu](mailto:eholshoe@uri.edu)

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 marked a large, negative shift in the perception of Islam in the United States and Europe. In the decades since, Islam and the Islamic practice of veiling, or hijab, has been brought to light through socio-political debates and critique across the U.S. and Europe. As visual representations of Islam, the hijab is frequently associated with terrorism and a fear of Islam. As a result, hijab donning Muslim women are often the victims of negative stereotyping and discrimination. For example, controversy over banning the burkini -a modest bathing suit nicknamed after the burka- sparked a contentious and often racially-tinged debate in France about Franco culture, religious freedom, and dress (Bowen, 2007; Said-Moorhouse, 2018). In Spain, debates over the right to wear the hijab in the public sphere have resulted in hijab bans for teachers and government officials (Bowen, 2007). Upon election, the first hijab wearing U.S. Congresswoman Ilhan Omar faced a historical ban on wearing headdresses in Congress supported by legislators who opposed her political beliefs. (Tully-McManus, 2018). Fortunately for Congresswoman Omar, this ban was overruled and she was allowed to wear her hijab in Congress on the basis that it is religious dress.

A change in discourse and the rise of social activism are slowly reshaping the West's image of the hijab. At the forefront of this discourse and social activism, one will find social media influencers, who use their platform to not only build a united

community of like-minded Muslims, but to engage with non-Muslims users to shape and inform narratives surrounding hijab. This kind of socio-political interaction is not always intentional, but the broadly accessible space that the Internet provides invites these conversations. Fashion media platforms like Elle, Allure, and Vogue, have highlighted purveyors of modest fashion as well as these social media influencers, acknowledging a space for modest fashion and modest fashion bloggers in the fashion industry (Abelman, 2018; Chevel, 2018; Dato, 2017; Fearson, 2018; Fowler, 2018; Lapidus, 2017; Rudolfo, 2017, 2018; Niven-Phillips, 2018; Yaeger, 2018,).

While Muslims are not the only group who practice modesty, the mainstream perspective of the hijab changes and hijab-wearing social media influencers become more visible has coincided with the demand for modest fashionable apparel growing throughout the world. Modest fashion meets the religious dress demands of multiple religious groups, such as the Hasidic Jewish community and the Church of the Latter-Day Saints, but also non-religious social groups in which modesty is valued, like women's business wear. The fashion industry has acknowledged the modest fashion market with Modest Fashion Weeks in London, Jakarta, Istanbul and Dubai (Modest Fashion Weeks, 2018). On the runway in 2016, Indonesian designer Anniesa Hasibuan stunned New York Fashion Week with an all hijab collection- a first for NYFW (Pruitt, 2016). Hijabi model Halima Aden graced the pages of Sport's Illustrated Swimsuit Edition in 2019, as the first Burkini wearing model in their history (Sports Illustrated: Swimsuit Edition, 2019).

Producers of fast fashion are now moving into modest fashion market. Uniqlo collaborated with veiled British designer Hana Tajima to create modest fast fashion

options, including head scarves and under-scarves (Uniqlo, 2018). In 2018, Nike produced the Nike Hijabi Pro, an athletic hijab garment, and promoted it with the help of veiled champion fencer Ibtihaj Mohammad (Nike News, 2017). Social media influencers also have created their own lines of modest fashionable apparel that directly cater to their specific needs, such as U.S. based online modest retailer Haute Hijab ([hautehijab.com](http://hautehijab.com)) and U.K. based online modest retailer Skin ([habibadasilva.com/collections/skin](http://habibadasilva.com/collections/skin)).

While the changing attitudes towards hijab and modest fashion are contributing to an increase of interest in the modest fashion market, little research has been done in regards to veiled social media influencers and the information they present through their online social media posts about their dress habits, identity and socio-political and religious views. Such knowledge could inform creators and marketers of fashionable apparel and build upon existing knowledge for anthropologists and dress historians.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### **Islamic Dress**

There is a growing body of ethnographic literature focusing on Islamic dress. Aimed towards a Western audience, this area of study aims to bridge the gap between two cultures that is often perceived as vastly different. El-Guindi (1999) provides the basis of much of the research and commentary on female Islamic dress. El-Guindi breaks down female Islamic dress to its most basic tenets and examines it in a variety of cultures, providing a near complete overview of feminine dress in the Islamic world. El-Guindi however does not delve into Islamic dress outside of the Islamic world and as literature published before the terrorist attacks of 9/11/2001, it does not address the socio-cultural changes, stereotypes and misunderstandings of the Islamic community. El-Guindi's research provides the basis for nearly all contemporary scholarly research on Islamic dress.

Mossière (2012) offers an important consideration for this area of research, stating that young Muslims living outside of majority Islamic areas do not choose to dress in cultural traditional styles, but rather adapt modesty to western fashionable apparel.

Most recently, the British scholar Reina Lewis offers analysis of female Islamic dress in the U.K. Both of her works "Muslim Fashion: Contemporary Style Cultures" (2015) and "Modest Fashion: Styling Bodies, Mediating Faith" (2013) examine

Islamic fashion in the contemporary and western sphere, considering style varieties, reasoning for garment choices, and methods of acquiring fashionable apparel. Lewis offers some insight into the online presence of Muslim modest fashionable apparel, but this insight is limited by its focus on online purveyors of modest fashion and the time of writing, as much has changed in the online world since.

### ***Defining the Hijab***

The term “hijab” is an Arabic word that refers to the religious practice of veiling in Islam, or the covering of the hair. “Hijab” refers to both the veil itself, as well as the practice of modesty. Directly translated from Arabic, “hijab” literally refers to a physical separation or a barrier or screen, and not necessarily a veil or specific garment (Benaïbi & Elmarsafy, 2015). In the Islamic holy book, the Qur’an, the term “hijab” is used in this literal manner and is not used in reference to veiling (Benaïbi & Elmarsafy, 2015). In fact, while modesty is mentioned and prescribed, the proper way in which to observe hijab is not explicitly stated in the Qur’an- leaving it open to interpretation. Using Qur’anic verses and hadiths<sup>1</sup> that refer to the act of modesty, the female Islamic practice of veiling or hijab has evolved in the contemporary world to mean a woman covering her head hair and body (including, in some sects and cultures, to obscuring the shape of the body), leaving only the face and hands uncovered (Pfluger-Schindlbeck, 2006).

---

<sup>1</sup> The statements and actions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad

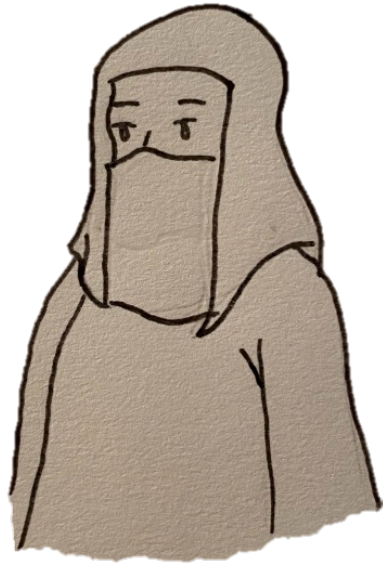


*Figure 1.* Illustration of a standard hijab style.  
Illustrated by Erika Holshoe



*Figure 2.* Illustration of a Shayla style hijab.  
Illustrated by Erika Hoshoe





*Figure 3.* Illustration of Niqab face veil.  
Illustrated by Erika Holshoe



*Figure 4.* Illustration of a Burka.  
Illustrated by Erika Holshoe

Bentaïbi and Elmarsafy (2015) argue that the practice of veiling creates a separation between “the sacred and the non-sacred, or the divine and the human” (p. 214). Pfluger-Schindlbeck (2006) builds on previous anthropological research on the symbolism of hair, including Marcus (1992), who states that control over hair allows for women to maintain ablution and Leach (1958) and Synnott (1993), who state that hair is associated with sexuality and control. Pfluger-Schindlbeck that control over hair allows for women to maintain ablution and becomes a symbol of sexual and moral control.

With such an association to female sexuality, the veil is typically donned by women once they reach puberty as a sign of their womanhood. After putting on the hijab, Muslim women can only reveal their hair to other females or male relatives, including their husband, father, and sons (Mossière, 2011). Thus, the veil offers spiritual protection as well as protection of female sexuality.

While the veil is typically associated with womanhood, Islam dictates that the practice of hijab is for both genders- both genders are expected to dress and behave modestly (Pfluger-Schindlbeck, 2006). Men are asked to conceal their bodies through clothing as well as avert their gaze from women to avoid any improper sexual feelings or behaviors. But only women are asked to conceal their hair as it is seen as holding a “central place in feminine temptation” (Hirsch, 2017).

It’s important to note that Islam is not the only religion to prescribe veiling or modest dress. The practice of female modest dress is fluid throughout time and culture. All Abrahamic religious (Islam included) prescribe female veiling in their religious texts, as is evident in the depiction of the Virgin Mary veiled, veiled women

in Catholic churches, and Hasidic Jewish women veiling with a tichel (see Appendix A, *tichel*) or wig. In contemporary society, modest dress is seen throughout cultures, regardless of religious identity. For example, the American professional and academic settings, rules regarding modest dressing are somewhat common place, and often a source of contention (Lakritz, 2018; MacArthur, 2019; Zhou, 2015). Whereas a bikini or spaghetti straps would be allowed on an American beach, they would not be allowed in the professional or academic setting (Lakritz, 2018; MacArthur, 2019; Zhou, 2015).

Modest dress does not always include veiling, but instead refers to women dressing to cover the majority of the body, often to obscure the shape of the body. In this discussion, modest dress will be a general term that refers to dress that conceals the body, leaving only the neck, lower arms, ankles, face and/or head hair uncovered.

### **Hijab in Politics**

Said (2003) illustrated the stark divide between the U.S. and Euro-centric cultures and the Middle East, or Levant, and this cultural distance and misunderstanding is evident in the political landscape surrounding the hijab. As a result of changing attitudes towards Muslims in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the hijab (as a symbol of Islam) has become the focus of a variety of works analyzing the negative impacts of stereotyping of Muslims in non-Muslim areas.

Bowen (2007) analyzed French attitudes towards the hijab in the wake of a series of hijab bans across Europe. Bowen concluded that the hijab's position as a religious symbol -a symbol of Islam- did not fit with ideas of secularism in France. The

headscarf was seen as a barrier for cultural integration into society and a tool to oppress women (Bowen, 2007).

Rahmath, Chambers and Wakewich (2016) interviewed Muslim women in Canada about their experiences with hijab and found that they experienced discrimination, negative stereotyping and hate crimes. Strabac, et al (2016) were able to expand on this concept by concluding that, in Canada, veiled Muslim women were more likely to be denied interview or a job, regardless of their qualifications or experience.

Endelstein and Ryan (2013) analyzed the dress of veiled Muslim women in Paris and London and found that Muslim women were victims of negative stereotyping, discrimination and hate crimes. They noted that Muslim women felt religiously obligated to strictly observe modesty regulations, which resulted in feeling as though stood out as different from their peers.

It should also be noted many in the West view the hijab as tool of oppression towards women. This could be because it does not fit with Western ideals of dress and religious expression. While in some places practicing hijab is mandatory, for most the hijab is a choice influenced by religious beliefs and common socio-cultural practices.

### **Hijab in Social Media**

The age of the Internet has completely altered the way in which consumers access, share and acquire ideas and items of fashionable apparel. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram provide a medium to share these ideas and build niche communities with similarly minded folk. There is literature analyzing the online Islamic community with regard to stereotyping (Fung, Rahmund & Yeo, 2016) and Islamic jurisprudence in this online space (Akou 2010). Most recent literature on

identity formation by veiled Muslim women on social media (Kraeplin & Kavacki 2017), is systematically flawed and failed to provide a coherent thesis, methodology or data to back up their claims and analyses.

### **Fashion Theory**

In his famous article from 1904 “Fashion,” Simmel (1957) argued that man is dualistic and through fashion fights a battle of imitation and differentiation. Kawamura (2005) expands this idea by stating that fashion is the prevailing accepted dress utilized only for a certain period of time and is dictated by change and novelty.

In “The Fashion System,” Roland Barthes (1990) presented the idea that dress is a system of communication. Barthes argued that not only was fashion symbolic and meaningful, but fashion could be likened to the grammatical and functional structures of language. The concept of fashion as a system of functional grammatical structures has been deemed problematic by Carter (2012). While dress may not function grammatically as a language, the symbolic nature of dress is communicative. It can inform others of values, culture, religion and status. The hijab itself can communicate one’s status as Muslim and female, and through careful analysis of dress presented in social media posts, other communicated values of participants can be determined.

### **Identity of Islam**

Noted writer and sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois presented in his 1903 book “The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches” the concept of “double consciousness” (DuBois, Scott Holloway, 2015). Du Bois identified double identity is the sensation of having your individual identity fragmented into multiple parts (Du Bois, Scott Holloway, 2015). Du Bois argues that double consciousness is the ability to look at

one's identity through one's own individual lens and from the lens of the outside world looking in (Du Bois, Scott Holloway, 2015). While Du Bois created this concept for the sociological analysis of the black experience in the United States, the concept was expanded to include the Muslim diaspora by Nahid Afrose Kabir in "Young American Muslims" (2012). Kabir argues that the Muslim diaspora in the United States are conflicted by the presence of multiple identities. Kabir also argues that the identities of the Muslim diaspora are negotiable, situational, and spontaneous.

### **Social Identity**

Identity is the way which one understands and defines who they are within the world. Identity is fluid, constantly being negotiated and is shaped by sense of place, context and relationships (Wearing, 2011). Social identity is used to describe the way in which an individual's sense of self is created and influenced through their membership of a social group or groups (Deaux, 2000; Tajfel, 1974;). Rather than be informed by their unique individualism, one's social identity is informed by their membership, attachment or relationship with broader social structures and groups.

Four principles, as defined by Tajfel (1974), guide one's social identity: 1) continuity (i.e. continuity throughout time amongst the self and the group), 2) distinctiveness (i.e. differentiation from others), 3) self-efficacy (i.e. ability to control one's life), and 4) self-esteem (i.e. values of self-worth).

### **Diasporic Identity**

One of the many social groups one may subscribe to is ethnic group and/or diasporic minority. Ethnic groups are defined as groups with shared ethnic attitudes, knowledge and behaviors (Cislo, 2018). Diaspora minorities are defined as any ethnic

group lacking a homeland and/or with a recreated or imagined homeland (Anderson, 2001). Diaspora minorities include immigrants, refugees, migrant labor, and those forced into diaspora through enslavement, colonialism, exile and indenture (Anderson, 2001). While religion is not determined by ethnicity, religion can play a part of one's ethnic identification. Even amongst those who are secular, religion can be an integral part of one's self prescribed ethnic identification, as religion presents a social group for one to identify themselves with (Anderson, 2001). The population surveyed in this project are of the cultural diaspora in the U.S. & Europe who practice Islam, which brings diasporic identity into the discussion.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### ***Social Representation Theory***

Social representation theory (SRT) was proposed by Serge Moscovici as a way to study social behavior. Moscovici (1963) defines SRT as, “the elaborating of a social object by the community for the purpose of behaving and community” (p. 251). Moscovici presents two major processes through which communities develop representations: anchoring and objectification. Objectification is the process through which social groups or communities assimilate objects into their existing categorical system. Hoijer (2011) states that there are two types of objectification: emotional objectification and objectification through personification. Emotional objectification occurs when “there is a strong emotional component involved.” Objectification through personification is when a concept or idea is linked to a specific person (Hoijer, 2011). Anchoring is the completion of objectification, in which a new object is categorized into existing “unconscious” or familiar categories (Daanen, 2009). It

creates meaning onto a previously considered “foreign” object (Daanen 2009). Daanen (2009) provides the example of the term “iron horse,” which refers to locomotive machines. Upon their invention and integration into society, the colloquial term “iron horse” demonstrates the conversion of a foreign object (ie., a locomotive) to a known object (ie., the horse, made of iron) (Daanen, 2009).

Moscovici (1988) proposed three distinctive types of representations: hegemonic representations, emancipated representations and polemic representations. Hegemonic representations are uniform representations across a macro unit (Hoijer, 2011; Moscovici, 1988). Emancipated representations are how subgroups create their own representations within a larger society, with some degree of autonomy (Hoijer, 2011; Moscovici, 1988). Lastly, polemic representations are mutually exclusive and created by social conflicts (Hoijer, 2011; Moscovici, 1988).

Social representation theory has also been applied to studies of national identity in culturally diverse societies (Andreouli & Chryssochoou, 2015), to studies of media and communication (Hoijer, 2011), and to studies of religious communities, including British Muslim communities in London (Sartawi, 2015). Andreouli and Chryssochoou (2015) contend that identity can be seen as “a system of knowledge about oneself, about others and about the social context which is constructed and negotiated within social relations” (pp. 312), which makes an individual or group identity a social representation. Thus, SRT can be used to analyze participant’s individual and group identities through dress.

If we refer back to Barthes’ notion on fashion and dress as symbolic and meaningful, it should be noted that dress itself is a representation that can be



objectified and anchored by different communities throughout various time frames. If dress is a form of communication and a potential social representation that is negotiated by individuals in their unique societal spaces, then SRT can easily and effectively be applied to dress studies and will be used in as the framework for analysis in this study.

### **Purpose statement**

With the events of 9/11 changing the socio-political landscape of Europe and the U.S., veiled Muslim women became targeted as a visual identifier of their negatively stereotyped culture and religion. Diasporic Muslim women living in the U.S. and U.K face a daily struggle of balancing their religious and cultural identities with Western standards and fashion codes. Social media has offered a place for diaspora veiled Muslim social media influencers, often called “hijbis” or “hijbaistas”<sup>2</sup> (see Appendix A), to express their navigation of these various social codes through visual hijab tutorials, modest style look-books, reviews of fashion lines (both modest and non-modest), and reacting to opinions in the comment sections. The aim of this study is to analyze how female Muslim social media influencers balance religious and cultural demands and identity creation with fashionable modest apparel. Through the lens of social representation theory, the following research question will be considered: How do female Muslim social media influencers use fashionable apparel on social media to negotiate cultural and religious demands in conjunction with exploration of personal identities?

---

<sup>2</sup> A term combining *hijabi* and *fashionista* to describe a veiled Muslim female who participates in contemporary fashion spaces

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

Netnography is a qualitative research method that adapts ethnography to study online communities (Kozinets, 2002, 2009). The basis of Netnography is unobtrusive observations, whose interpretation of data relies on strong intellectual analysis by the observer (Kozinets, 2002). Unlike traditional ethnographic methods, the lack of face to face contact and emphasis of unobtrusive observations enables researchers to collect data that is not filtered or altered by the presence of the researcher (Kozinets, 2002). Online data collection and observation presents ethical quandaries regarding consent and privacy, and it is important to note that netnographic methodology provides specific protocol for ethnographic study of online communities that is structured to protect participants from potential harm (Kozinets, 2002, p. 8). This method was selected for the analysis of influencer posts on Instagram, as it is the only methodology that utilizes ethnographic research methodologies in the online space, has observed protocol and ethics, and is unobtrusive.

#### **Data Collection**

As this study looks at social media, Instagram was chosen as the source of data as users frequently publish both visual and written content. Each post on Instagram contains an image and a written section for descriptions, feelings, hashtags, and links to other websites. Comments on participant's posts by other users of Instagram were not considered. Using the established coding keys (see Appendix B), the researcher coded all posts published on Instagram by participants during a three-month time

frame from the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, 2019 to the tenth of August, 2019. These posts were accessed directly through the Instagram app using a private Instagram account specifically created for this project. All data collected was recorded onto spread-sheet on a secure computer. Laestadius (2016) states that Instagram posts are frequently amended or deleted and the data collected from these posts must reflect that in order to respect the privacy of the users. Amends to edited posts were added to the data and posts that were deleted or made private were excluded from data, as their deletion is considered lack of consent for public usage (Laestadius, 2016). There was not a secondary coder.

Participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

### ***Influencer status***

The term “influencer” is typically used to describe an Instagram user with a large following, regular posting, and frequent paid or unpaid sponsorship. Participants considered to be influencers were chosen as they posted at least three times a week and their large audience base and sponsorship demonstrated “influence” within the modest fashion, Muslim and fashion communities online.

### ***Age***

According to Business Insider, 90% of Instagram users are under the age of 35 (Dada, 2017). During initial observations, it was observed that the majority of influencers were under the age of 30. Participants under 18 years of age were not considered because they are considered minors and present legal and ethical problems. In order to prevent the exploitation of minors, there are stricter laws and rules that regulate their participation in academic studies.

### ***Gender***

Although the concept of hijab is observed by both genders in Islam, the hijab veil or headscarf is worn only by female identifying Muslims.

Practicing Muslims are more likely to obey religious dress code, and were thus an important demographic for this research. Since the concept of hijab is built on modesty and does not always dictate veiling, modestly dressed Muslims were a part of the demographic. This meant that some participants veiled and some did not, but all followed similar modesty guidelines.

### ***Religion***

As this research pertains to the Muslim diaspora active on the Internet, social media influencers cannot live in a Muslim-majority area. The U.S. and Europe have areas with notable Muslim diasporic communities, such as in Michigan and London, and were chosen as overarching locations for this reason. Aside from their residence in a non-Muslim majority country, the specific location of these participants is irrelevant as their participation is online and links multiple non-majority Muslim communities across these areas.

### ***Language***

The researcher only speaks English and German and thus chose participants who posted mostly in English so textual posts could be understood in full. While Instagram does provide a translation tool, it does not always translate effectively or with nuance, which can negatively impact interpretation by the researcher. It is noted that this poses a limitation on this research, as it limits the population to those within the English language speaking and posting bubble. English is truly the lingua franca of both the

real world and the online world. While participants may be bilingual, utilization of English allows them to connect with internet users all over the world, particularly those with a similar diasporic background.

Arabic is the language of Islam, and as a result, many practitioners of Islam are bilingual. Translation of the Islamic holy book the Qur'an is frowned upon, as the original text is the literal word of Allah and any translation or change is considered meddling with the literal word<sup>3</sup>. McCloud (2006) states that for Muslims, Arabic is the uniting language (p. 78-9;81-2).

### ***Frequency of Posts***

To gather enough data and to meet influencer status, participants were chosen based on their ability to post at least three times a week, which provides the investigator with enough data to make meaningful analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The content of influencer posts (i.e. components of images, associated text or video with audio) was coded using open-coding from grounded theory. Grounded Theory enables researchers to find emergent sets of concepts that can be integrated into a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Open-coding is utilized to find these emergent concepts and create data from them. Open-coding allows for categorization of themes that may arise from the images, texts and videos posted on Instagram (Strauss &

---

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that humanity has added onto the literal word of god through hadiths (see Appendix A), through Sira (see Appendix A), and through the Sunnah (see Appendix A) which are all written by third party human hands.

As a result of its non-translatable nature, clergymen and imams hold the power of interpretation of the Qu'ran.

Corbin, 1994). Such categorization can then be quantified, thusly providing quantitative evidence (Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

Prior to the start of this project, several Muslim female veiled Instagram influencers were monitored in a trial run to gather information regarding possible codes for dress types and post themes. The notes gathered informed the codes developed for data collection and a coding key was created (see Appendix B). Through the initial observations of the pretrial, it was noted that influencers frequently posted about the following topics: experiences whilst traveling, family members, responses to socio-political events or the sharing of socio-political ideologies, and activities or prayers surrounding religious holidays. It was also noted that the majority of posts appeared to be supported by corporations, mostly fashion brands such as Zara, H&M, and Modanisa. It was noted that each individual observed modesty through fashion in a completely different way. Hijab styles varied from person to person, with turbans (see Appendix A, *turban*) and shaylas (see Appendix A, *shayla*) appearing to be most popular. Trends such as wearing a baseball cap, hat or square scarf permeated throughout, but were adapted to fit individuals' modesty requirements. The level of body uncovered by garments also varied, but none of the observed participants showed any part of their body below the neck, from the elbow of the arm up, or above the ankle. It was also noted that traditional ethnic garments associated with Islam, such as the abayya or jilbab (see Appendix A, *abayya, jilbab*), were rarely worn. From this information, a quantifiable coding system was developed (see Appendix B).

### ***Limitations***

Netnography is limited by the ethical balance that researchers face, as the invasion of the participant's privacy or unwanted collection of online data can corrupt the data and destroy trust (Kozinets, 2002, p. 8).

Coding through grounded theory is limited by its analysis. Though it aims to quantify descriptive and qualitative concepts, the data is produces must be analyzed by a researcher with extensive knowledge of the field in order to creative meaningful analysis. This presents the opportunity for misinterpretation of data in analysis.

### ***Methodological Integrity***

Credibility was established by the author's prolonged observation of this community (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The pre-trial enabled the author to become familiar with the community and the important ideas portrayed through their posts. This foundation of knowledge enabled the author to not only create a codebook that reflected topics posted by participants, but also to analyze the collected data with an understanding of the community. This foundation of knowledge paired with the collected data ensure veracity of claims presented in this study.

It is important to note that the lack of a secondary coder presents a potential for bias in data analysis. Inter-rater reliability was not established due to the absence of the secondary coder.

Dependability was established by utilizing public Instagram posts (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Researchers who which to view the posts from the time period of data collection may do so with any Instagram account. This allows for the data collection to be easily repeatable (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Posts that were altered or deleted,

were reflected in the data by either deletion of their data or altering of the data to better reflect the post's edited state (Laestadius, 2016).

Reliability of the data was established through an audit trail (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008) aimed to make the research process transparent and repeatable, and thus ensuring claims and observations are accurate. During data collection, the researcher kept a journal of notes of regarding data analysis and interpretation. This paired with the public nature of the Instagram accounts surveyed ensures that the data collection methods can be repeated and the thought-process of the researchers' analysis interrogated.



## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

The descriptive data in this study revealed valuable information about dress usage and identity trademarks amongst young Muslim diasporic women. While 100% of the participants surveyed dressed modestly for religious reasons, the levels of modesty, hijab styles and Islamic ethnic dress varied greatly and perhaps aligned more with western fashion trends and values of modesty. Important identity themes of family, socio-political and religious advocacy, and religion were surprisingly not prevalent throughout participants' social media posts. However, sponsorship and travel (which was typically linked to sponsorship- where content was explicitly sponsored or businesses and products were tagged in a post) were incredibly frequent throughout participants' posts which raises questions about authentic identity on social media.

Table 1

#### *Demographic Information for Participants*

Characteristic	Participant Group (N=10) <sup>a</sup>
Age	
18-24	2
25-30	5
Not Specified	3

Married	
Yes	7
No	3
Has children	
Yes	5
No	5
Is a Business Owner	
Yes	4
No	6
Location	
US	4
UK	5
EU	1

---

<sup>a</sup> N=10 is the total number of participants

### **Findings: Dress Types**

Table 2

#### *Modesty Level*

Characteristic	Participant Group (N=513) <sup>a</sup>
Face Visible	493
Neck Visible	207
Arms Visible	109

Ankles Visible	93
Hair Visible	210

---

<sup>a</sup> N=513 is the number of posts in which the body of the influencer was visible and thus their modesty level could be documented.

While modesty levels vary based on personal preference, the face was almost always shown in images, which suggests that niqabs and burqas (see Appendix A) are perhaps unpopular amongst diaspora youth. Necks were visible 40.4%, while visible arms (21.2%) and ankles (18.1%) were far less common. This perhaps demonstrates that the neck may be more acceptable to be on view than various other parts of the body. Even though hijab was worn in 86% of posts surveyed, some level of visible hair (40.9%) was popular amongst participants. As a garment meant to conceal hair, the commonality of visible hair poses interesting questions about personal interpretation of religious doctrine and assimilation to western dress codes.

Table 3

*Hijab Style*

Characteristic	Participant Group (n=446) <sup>a</sup>
Traditional Hijab	72
Turban	162
Shayla	180
Hat	8
Square scarf	16

Baseball Cap	0
Solid Colored Hijab	385
Patterned/Print Hijab	26

---

<sup>a</sup> N=446 is the number of posts in which the hijab was present or visible.

Overall, the most popular type of hijab was a Turban (36.3%) or Shayla (40.4%) style with a solid colored fabric (86.3%). Interestingly, the traditional hijab style (which does not leave hair or the neck visible) was only worn 16.1% of times when hijab was present in posts. It is unknown why solid colored fabric seems to be preferred over patterned or printed fabric (5.8%) for hijab. Hats (1.8%), baseball caps (0%), and square scarves (3.6%) were not frequently worn, but were highly prominent during the initial pre-survey. These garments demonstrate flexibility with styling of hijab, as they break away from the norms of Islamic religious dress.

Using SRT's arguments about anchoring and objectification, it can be surmised that the lack of popularity of the traditional hijab in favor of alternative, more westernized styles demonstrates the search to transcribe western garments into a modest Islamic dialogue. Worn as both in adherence to religious rules and as an item of fashion, a new contextual meaning is given to the hijab.



Figure 5. Instagram user @noor wearing a blue baseball hat on top of her yellow turban at a New York Fashion Week event. [www.instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com)  
Image courtesy of Noor Tagouri

Table 4

*Use of Traditional Islamic Dress*

Characteristic	Participant Group (n=579) <sup>a</sup>
Yes	14
No	565

<sup>a</sup> N=579 is the total number of posts analyzed.

Traditional Islamic dress was defined in this particular setting as the wearing of abaya, jilbab, salwar kameez, chador, or any other non-veil ethnic garb typically worn by practitioners of Islam in Muslim majority areas or in religious settings (see Appendix A). Traditional Islamic dress was only worn in 2.4% of surveyed social

media posts, which demonstrates that this is not a popular dress option amongst diaspora youth. As Strübel (2011) argues about ethnic dress amongst the Nigerian diaspora in America, ethnic dress seems to be most comfortably worn in settings where it is the norm. Given the aggressive stereotyping Muslim women face, it does not seem unreasonable to state that traditional garments like the abaya or jilbab are not popularly donned amongst the Muslim diasporic youth as it might make them stand out amongst their peers and perhaps even make them a greater target for discrimination and hate crimes.

Choosing to don an abaya versus jeans and a t-shirt is a form of code-switching. Code-switching is the use of two or more language varieties in the same interaction (Gilyard, 1991, p. 31) and their usage is demanded by the social situation (Elgin, 1979). It is far more than a convergence of grammatical or semantic variations. It is also a convergence of identities. Keith Gilyard (1991) argues that identity is wrapped up in language, and code-switching offers two or more identities through which to wade through and find oneself. In the 1950s, Roland Barthes (1990) argued that dress is a form of communication. Barthes outlined a social dress code in which items dress could be read as signs (Carter, 2012, p. 344). If dress is a form of communication, then altering religious or ethnic dress to fit social contexts and expectations (such as wearing a t-shirt and jeans with hijab in the U.S. or an abaya in a mosque), demonstrates the ability to code-switch between socio-cultural dress norms.

## Findings: Post Themes

Table 5

### *Travel*

Characteristic	Participant Group (n=239) <sup>a</sup>
Travel in U.S. & Europe	174
Travel in the Middle East	37
Travel Elsewhere in the World	28

<sup>a</sup> N=239 is the number of posts with content related to travel.

Travel was a popular content option for the participants surveyed and consisted of 41.3% of all posts surveyed. Travel throughout the U.S. and Europe (72.8%) was most common, whereas travel to the Middle East (15.5%) or elsewhere in the world (11.7%) was much lower. It was also noted during initial observations that travel focused content sponsored by the government or corporations based Dubai and Saudi Arabia was highly prevalent. For these reasons, a higher rate of travel to the Middle East was initially suspected, however the low rate of travel to the Middle East correlates with lack of travel to homelands by diasporic populations (Anderson, 2001; Strübel, 2011).

The Middle East is often considered to be a homeland for Islam. And indeed, the most significant places of importance in Islamic religious practice reside within the geographical Middle East or Levant. An example is the hajj (see Appendix A), which takes place in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. For this reason, one could presume that the “Middle East serves as a religious homeland and participants in this study would be

expected to travel to there more commonly than non-Muslims. Yet this was not the case, even during the holy month of Ramadan.

It should also be noted that amongst Muslims, there is debate regarding the status of Arabs and other ethnic groups, where Arabs consider themselves to be superior due to their heritage.

Table 6

*Sponsorship*

Characteristic	Participant Group (n=419) <sup>a</sup>
Fast Fashion Brand	174
High End Brand	115
Modest Fashion Brand	118
Beauty Brand	85
Personal Business or Brand	55
Other Brand	138

<sup>a</sup> N=419 is the number of posts in which a brand or product was promoted. Sponsorship was incredibly prevalent throughout social media posts (72.3%).

Sponsorship by fast fashion brands (41.5%) was the most common, which perhaps may reflect the taste, budget, and shopping habits of the audiences of those surveyed. Fast fashion brands were considered brands that create large amounts of affordable fashionable apparel, accessible at both physical and online retail venues, such as H&M, Zara, and ASOS. High-end brands consisted of those financially inaccessible to the average shopper, such as Dior, Prada, Burberry, Yves Saint Laurent, Marc Jacobs,



etc. Modest brands were those that specifically created modest fashionable apparel, regardless of religious affiliation, such as Modanisa, Haute Hijab and Skin. Beauty brands included makers and distributors of skincare products, make up, and perfume, such as Maybelline, L'Oreal, Clinique, Estée Lauder, Benefit Cosmetics, MaxFactor, and Armani Beauty. Sponsorship by other brands that those note during initial observations was much higher than expected (32.9%) and included restaurants, hotels, magazines, jewelry companies and apps. Such sponsorship demonstrates interest in participating in the fashion system and the want for fashionable apparel.

Table 7

*Religion*

Characteristic	Participant Group (n=579) <sup>a</sup>
Reference to prayer	18
Reference to religious holiday	102
Reference to religious scripture	3

<sup>a</sup> N=579 is the total number of posts analyzed.

As demonstrated by the data in Table 7, references to religion in any capacity were relatively scarce. This is significant in that during the time frame of this survey, the month-long holiday Ramadan (May 6<sup>th</sup> 2019-June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019) and Eid al-Fitr (June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019) occurred, which should have contributed to the higher percentage of references to religious holidays versus other reference to religion.

The avoidance of religious references may be a conscious choice. Islamic tradition emphasizes the practice of fiqh or jurisprudence. Practitioners of Islam are encouraged

to provide religious guidance to others (Hirsch, 2017, p. 34). Fiqh is often unsolicited, and it is clear that fiqh regarding dress practices is not well-received by Muslim women. Comment sections on social media are noted for inviting harsh judgement and bullying from internet users who hide behind anonymity to voice otherwise unacceptable criticism. The comment sections provide a place to amplify the practice of fiqh, completely unsolicited and without the barrier of face-to-face interaction.

Kuwait-based influencer Ascia al-Faraj runs a popular blog called the Hybrids, which focuses on her culturally diverse family and their blended Kuwait-American identity. Her modest fashion is a highlight of her blog. In a video discussed on Vogue Arabia, al-Faraj stated, “I am not meant to be your Muslim role model, that was not what I set out to be, ever... I know the kindness I show to people, I think that should be my defining factor, I don’t think it should be anything that’s on my head” (Day, 2018). Her reluctance to be a “Muslim role model” could be in reaction to fiqh regarding how she personally practices Islam. However, such a statement ignores the fact that influencers such as al-Faraj are unintentionally role models for their audience- whether they like it or not.

Table 8

*Socio-political advocacy*

Characteristic	Participant Group (n=579) <sup>a</sup>
Reference to social advocacy	22
Reference to political advocacy	7
Reference to religious advocacy	4

<sup>a</sup> N=579 is the total number of posts analyzed.

Since a few of the participants surveyed have been previously vocal on social, political and religious issues, their social media posts were surveyed for such content. This included imagery and text that either explicitly referred to or indirectly referenced their position on socio-political and religious topics or that advocated for a specific position. As the large audience base for these influencers provides an excellent platform for creating socio-political discussions, it is noteworthy that only 5.6% of surveyed posts made any reference to the aforementioned socio-political ideas. While direct socio-political and religious statements are not being made, the presence of these influencers, their choice to adhere to Islamic modesty practices in a public sphere, and participate in global fashion culture demonstrates indirect socio-political meanings being placed onto their garments and social media posts.

Table 9

*Family*

Characteristic	Participant Group (n=579)
Reference to spouse or marriage	32
Reference to own children	67
Reference to other family members	33

<sup>a</sup> N=579 is the total number of posts analyzed.

While 70% of participants surveyed are married and half have children, it is interesting that there were not more references to husbands, children and extended family. While this could be for privacy reasons, the lack of reference of family is

interesting as Islamic religious doctrine advocates for Muslim women to be caregivers to their families, children and husbands. McCloud (2006) states that for both South Asian Muslims and Arab Muslims, family is “the community” and it’s “integrity, longevity, and cohesion” is of critical importance (p. 61). While individualism is admired and promoted in the U.S., the individual is the last priority in Islamic cultures. “The individual has duties and obligations but only after the responsibility to God; all other obligations are to the family” (McCloud, 2006, p. 83). With such a high value places on family, it would be expected that this would be prevalent throughout the participant’s projected online identity.

With so much value placed on family, it is important to note the role of the woman within the familial hierarchy. Women are expected to play an integral role in family life by being a domestic homemaker and child barer, whilst financially supported by the husband (Kabir, 2001, pp. 48-49).

Straying from this traditional representation of femininity, female gender roles, and expectations, demonstrates a rejection of these traditional values, roles and expectations. The meaning of Islamic womanhood is altered to one that is more fluid in its values and expectations.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The identities of individual members of the Muslim diaspora are unique and individualized. They are molded through both through cultural and religious heritage of their imagined homeland, and through the macro-society they reside. Through dress, the participants navigate multiple identities and establish themselves as individuals. Wearing blue jeans and a blazer, often seen as a quintessentially Western garment, alongside a hijab (see Figure 6), demonstrates an identity performing a balancing act between cultures and religious beliefs.



*Figure 6.* Instagram user @riskemohammad wearing a Shayla with blue jeans, sneakers and a blazer. [www.instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com/riskemohammad)  
Image courtesy of Rizqi Mohammad

The data presented in this study does not perhaps provide a firm answer to the research question. Instead of offering a generalized idea regarding this community's identity formation through fashionable modest apparel online, it offers a myriad of different individuals and perspectives and opens the door to further research.

Through the lens of SRT, the data shows a changing representation of the new Muslim diaspora- one that nods to their religious and cultural heritage by wearing hijab, but assimilates to their macro-society by participating in fashion trends. They change the representation of the hijab from one that represents religious piety and devotion, to one that demonstrates heritage. By participating in the fashion system, they go against traditional notions of hijab, and draw attention to themselves as fashion lovers and members of the young Muslim diaspora.

The high level of participation in the global fashion system brings up questions about authenticity and online identity. The presented online identity of these influencers is shaped by the prevalence of advertisements, brand deals, and sponsored products. The influencers are perhaps more interested in participating in fashion consumerism and techno-capitalism than demonstrating religious piety, sharing their personal life or political stances. Their true authentic identity is perhaps blurred by the glitz of techno-capitalism. Further research must be done to consider the impact of commercialization on online identity formation and presentation.

The data presented in this study paints a picture of the identity crisis and balancing acts of these young Muslim influencers and demonstrates that their personal identity is not quantifiable or definable, but rather unique. Using modest fashion and hijab, the

influencers surveyed in this study are changing the representation of hijab both in their communities and in society at large. Within their communities, the hijab represents a veil that signifies piety and obedience to religious doctrine as well as and a fashionable garment. In this study, the participants demonstrated the importance of the hijab to their cultural identity, which in many ways was a separate from its historical past. The absence of religious expressions even during a period of significant religious obligation, indicates that the participates are forging a new identity that appears less rooted in ancient traditions and is more an expression of the modern individual. In this way, the hijab may be an expression of one's core faith or cultural roots, but may not represent the strength of religious devotion that is often assumed by outside observers. The hijab has been anchored as a cultural garment, rather than a religious garment. In the macro society in which these participants inhabit, the hijab is represented as a symbol of open discussion of Islam's place in the West and modest fashion as fashionable apparel. On social media, participants use modest fashionable apparel to create unique, individual identities that balance between "multiple identities" and may be less an expression of religiosity than of this combined cultural identity. They adapt their usage of the hijab, both the scarf itself and the concept, to participate in the fashion system of an ever-changing, inter-connected, and multi-cultural world.

### **Limitations**

There is a potential for bias in the data collected, as the data was collected only by the author herself and not checked for bias against the same data collected by others.

This research is also limited by the lack of participation from participants surveyed. As they were not offered a chance to complete a survey or interview to express their feelings, their intentions and ideas can only be examined through their posts. There is potential for bias, as the data from these posts is interpreted solely by the author and is not directly informed by the participants themselves. More research must be done to include the participants in the conversation about their own dress.

### ***Delimitations***

There are some limitations with the population surveyed. “Influencer” status is only awarded to a handful few, and does not include the general population who do not have access to branding, sponsorship or large audience. Analysis of participants who only speak English narrows the pool of eligible participants and ignores other populations of Muslims who may not speak English. More research needs to be done to include participants from other backgrounds outside of the English-speaking world or the Western hemisphere. This study does not include Muslim men or Muslims who identify outside of the gender binary. More research must be done to include these populations in this discussion.



## APPENDIX A

### GLOSSARY

ABAYA – a traditional long, loose cloak, most commonly worn in black. It is sometimes decorated on the edges with embroidery or tie cords. It is often worn over regular home or street clothes, making it convenient and a popular garment for Muslim women across the globe.

ABLUTION – refers to ritual purity. It is required for prayers and making the pilgrimage. There is a variety of cleansing methods and rituals necessary to maintain ablution.

BURKA/BURQA – a traditional long black cloak worn over one's clothes. It covers the face and entirety of the body. Most commonly seen in Muslim-majority areas of East Africa.

CHADOR – a black cloak worn over a woman's clothes and is held together by the hand under the chin. Most likely to be seen in Iran.

FIQH – The human understanding of Islamic law. A principle of fiqh is jurisprudence, which promotes providing, analyzing Islamic law and guiding others towards proper observance of religious doctrine.

HADITH – the sayings and actions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. The hadith are used in conjunction with the Qur'an as a religious text and provides prescriptions for religious actions and behaviors.

HAJJ – the annual pilgrimage to the Mecca, Saudi Arabia. It is required to be carried out at least once in one's lifetime by those who are capable of performing the pilgrimage.

HARAM – Arabic term referring to actions or behaviors that are forbidden or considered sinful.

HIJAB – the generic term for a head scarf or veil used by all Muslims. The adoption of hijab requires both headgear and modest dress, as well as modest action.

HIJABI – a woman who wears hijab.

HIJABISTA – a combination of the terms *hijabi* and *fashionista*. It refers to a hijabi who is fashion minded.

IMAM – an Islamic religious leader. Always a man. Imams provide guidance on proper interpretation of the Qur'an.

JILBAB – the Qur'anic term that refers to woman's clothing. Today the jilbab is most associated with the tailored, stylized, modest garment worn in South Asia.

NIQAB – the generic term that refers to a face veil. It's a piece of black cloth that is tied around the head and over the head scarf, that covered the lower part of the face.

Women who wear niqabs are referred to as *niqabis*.

QUR'AN/KORAN – the religious text of Islam. It is a collection of messages sent from Allah to the Prophet Muhammad.

SALWAR KAMEEZ – a traditional two-piece ensemble from South Asia that consists of a long tunic (kameez) and bifurcated pants (salwar). It is worn by both men and women.

SHAYLA – a long scarf worn around the head and left loosely wrapped or partially unwrapped and hanging off the shoulders.

SIRA – the biographies of the life of the prophet Muhammad.

SUNNAH – religious texts which discusses the practices and traditions of Islam.

TICHEL – the Yiddish term for the headscarf or veil worn by Orthodox Jewish woman after marriage.

TURBAN – a headscarf worn by both men and women. It is a scarf that is folded and wrapped around the head, leaving the face and neck visible.

#### GLOSSARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amer, S., and Project Muse. (2014). *What Is Veiling? Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks*. University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Sourdel, D., & Sourdel-Thomine, J. (2007). *A glossary of Islam*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

## APPENDIX B

### Coding Systems

#### *Theme Codes*

Code	Category	Description & axial codes
1	Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. US &amp; Europe</li> <li>b. Middle East</li> <li>c. Elsewhere</li> </ul>
2	Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Fast fashion brand</li> <li>b. High end brand</li> <li>c. Modest fashion brand</li> <li>d. Beauty brand</li> <li>e. Personal Business</li> <li>f. Other</li> </ul>
3	Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prayer</li> <li>b. Holiday</li> <li>c. Scripture</li> </ul>
4	Socio-political Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Social advocacy</li> <li>b. Political advocacy</li> <li>c. Religious advocacy</li> </ul>
5	Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. spouse/marriage</li> <li>b. children</li> <li>c. other family</li> </ul>

*Dress Type Codes*

Code	Category	Description & axial codes
1	Hijab Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Traditional Hijab</li> <li>b. Turban</li> <li>c. Shayla</li> <li>d. Hat</li> <li>e. Baseball cap</li> <li>f. Patterned</li> <li>g. Black</li> </ul>
2	Modesty level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Face shown</li> <li>b. Neck shown</li> <li>c. Arms shown</li> <li>d. Ankles shown</li> <li>e. Hair shown</li> </ul>
3	Is Garment Traditionally Islamic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Yes</li> <li>b. No</li> </ul>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abelman, D. (2018, May). *17 Amazing Muslim Beauty Bloggers You Should Follow on Instagram*. Allure. <https://www.allure.com/story/muslim-beauty-bloggers>
- Akou, Heather. (2010). Interpreting Islam through the Internet: Making Sense of Hijab. *Contemporary Islam*, 4(3), 331-46.
- Amer, S., and Project Muse. (2014). *What Is Veiling? Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks*. University of North Carolina Press.
- Anderson, A.B. (2001). The complexity of ethnic identities: A post-modern reevaluation. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 1(3), 209-223.
- Andreouli, E., & Chryssochoou, X. (2015). Social representations of national identity in culturally diverse societies. In G. Sammut, E. Andreouli, G. Gaskell, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Social Representations* (pp. 309-322). Cambridge University Press
- Augoustinos, M., Hanson-Easey, S., & Due, C. (2015). The essentialized refugee: Representations of racialized 'Others'. In G. Sammut, E. Andreouli, G. Gaskell, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Social Representations* (pp. 323-340). Cambridge University Press
- Barthes, R. (1990). *The fashion system*. University of California Press.
- Bloomberg, L. D. & Volpe, M. (2008). Presenting methodology and research approach. *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A roadmap from beginning to end* (pp. 65-93). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc

- Bowen, J. R. (2007). *Why the French Don't like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space*. Princeton University Press.
- Breakwell, G. M. (1986). *Coping with threatened identities*. London: Methuen.
- Carder, S. "H&M has launched a new modest clothing line." *Evening Standard*, 8 May 2018. [https://www.standard.co.uk/fashion/news/hm-ltc-collection-modest-clothing-a3831701.html?utm\\_campaign=Echobox&utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_source=Twitter#link\\_time=1525848363](https://www.standard.co.uk/fashion/news/hm-ltc-collection-modest-clothing-a3831701.html?utm_campaign=Echobox&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#link_time=1525848363)
- Carter, M. Stuff and Nonsense: The Limits of the Linguistic Model of Clothing. *Fashion Theory*, 16(3), 343-353.
- Chevel, S. R. (2018, November). Project Runway's First Modest Muslim Finalist Loves Ruffly Socks and Loud Lipstick. *Racked*. <https://www.racked.com/2017/11/16/16667144/ayana-ife-project-runway-interview>
- Cislo, A.M. (2008). Ethnic identity and self-esteem: Contrasting Cubans and Nicaraguan young adults. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 30(2), 230-250.
- Dada, G.A. (2017, November). What Is Influencer Marketing And How Can Marketers Use It Effectively? *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2017/11/14/what-is-influencer-marketing-and-how-can-marketers-use-it-effectively/#d4a390223d13>

- Day, E. (2018, July). 'I Don't Consider Myself A Hijabi,' Says Ascia Al Faraj." *Vogue*. <https://en.vogue.me/fashion/i-dont-consider-myself-a-hijabi-says-ascia-al-faraj/>
- Datoo, S. (2017, March). Meet the Muslim Women Inspiring a Modest Revolution. *Bloomberg*. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-03-02/meet-the-muslim-women-inspiring-a-modest-revolution>
- Deaux, K. (2000). Models, Meanings and Motivations. *Social Identity Processes: Trends in Theory and Research*, 18-31.
- Du Bois, W., & Scott Holloway, J. (2015). *The souls of black folk*. Yale University Press.
- Ellemers, N., & Alexander Haslam, S. (2012). Social Identity Theory. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*. SAGE Publications Ltd, 379-399.
- Elmarsafy Z., and Bentaïbi, M. (2015). Translation and the World of the Text: On the Translation of the Word Hijab in the Qur'an. *The Translator*, 21(2), 210-22.
- El Guindi, F. (1999). *Veil: Modesty, Privacy, and Resistance* (Dress, Body, Culture). Berg, 1999.
- Endelstein, L., & Ryan, L. (2013). Dressing religious bodies in public spaces: gender, clothing and negotiations of stigma among Jews in Paris and Muslims in London. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, 47(2), 249-264.
- Entwistle, J. (2015). *The fashioned body: Fashion, dress and social theory*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Fearson, F. (2018, September). 'I Make a Bully Look Silly': Modest Fashion Star Dina Torkia on Outsmarting Hijab Haters. *The National*.



- <https://www.thenational.ae/lifestyle/fashion/i-make-a-bully-look-silly-modest-fashion-star-dina-torkia-on-outsmarting-the-hijab-haters-1.772332>
- Fowler, B. (2018, July). 6 Things to Know About Model Halima Aden. *Instyle*.  
<https://www.instyle.com/news/model-halima-aden-what-know-about-yeezy-runway>
- Fielding, N. G. (2014, November). Qualitative Research and Our Digital Futures. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(9), 1064–73.
- Gilgun, J. F. (2005). “Grab” and Good Science: Writing Up the Results of Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(2), 256-62.
- Gilyard, K. (1991). *Voice of the Self: A Study of Language Competence*. Wayne State University Press.
- Halima Aden 2019: Kenya. (2019). *Sports Illustrated: Swimsuit*.  
<https://swimsuit.si.com/swimsuit/model/halima-aden-2019-kenya>
- Hana Tajima: 2018 Spring/Summer Collection. (2018) *Uniqlo*.  
<https://www.uniqlo.com/my/hanatajima/>
- Hirsch, H. (2017). Hair: Practices and Symbolism in Traditional Muslim Societies. *Sociology of Islam*, 5(1), 33-55.
- Homepage. (2018). *Doosy-fil-tina*. <https://doosy-store.myshopify.com>
- Homepage. (2018). *Haute Hijab*. <https://www.hautehijab.com/>
- Homepage. (2018). *Pearl-Daisy*. <https://pearl-daisy.com/>
- Homepage: Dubai Modest Fashion Week. (2018). *Modest Fashion Weeks*.  
<https://www.modestfashionweeks.com/en/>

- Interview with Haute Hijab CEO Melanie Elturk. (2012, July). *Haute Hijab*.  
<https://www.hautehijab.com/blogs/hijab-fashion/6218858-interview-with-haute-hijab-ceo-melanie-elturk>
- Jaspal, R. & Breakwell, G.M. (2014). Identity Process Theory: Identity, social action and social change. Cambridge University Press.
- Jaspal, R., & Cinnirella, M. (2012). The construction of ethnic identity: Insights from identity process theory. *Ethnicities*, 12(5), 503-530.
- Jaspal, R., & Cinnirella, M. (2010). Media representations of British Muslims and hybridised threats to identity. *Contemporary Islam*, 4(3), 289-310.
- Kozinets, R. V. (2002), The Field Behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39, p. 61-72.
- Kozinets, R.V., P. Dolbec, and A. Earley (2014), Netnographic Analysis: Understanding Culture through Social Media Data, in Flick, U. ed. *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, Sage, 262-275.
- Kavakci, E., and C. R Kraeplin. (2017). Religious Beings in Fashionable Bodies: The Online Identity Construction of Hijabi Social Media Personalities. *Media, Culture & Society*, 39(6), 850-68.
- Kabir, Nahid Afrose. (2012). *Young American Muslims*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Kawamura, Y. (2004). *Fashion-ology* (Dress, Body, Culture). Berg.
- Lakritz, T. (2018, October). 9 outfits that violated dress codes in American schools. *Insider*. <https://www.insider.com/school-dress-code-violations-2018-9>

- Lapidus, F. (2017, September). From Refugee Camp to Runway, Hijab-wearing Model Breaks Barriers. *VOA*. <https://www.voanews.com/a/4026585.html>
- Laestadius, L. (2016) Instagram. in Sloan, L. & A. Quan-Haase. (Eds.) *the Sage Handbook of Social Media Research Methods*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Lauri, M. (2015). Social change, social marketing and social representations. In G. Sammut, E. Andreouli, G. Gaskell, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Social Representations* (pp. 397-410). Cambridge University Press.
- Leach, E. (1958). Magical Hair. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 88, p. 147–64.
- Lewis, R. (2015). *Muslim Fashion: Contemporary Style Cultures*. Duke University Press.
- Lewis, R. (2013). *Modest Fashion: Styling Bodies, Mediating Faith*. Dress Cultures. London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013.
- Lindholm, C. (2008). *Culture and Authenticity*. Blackwell Publishing.
- MacArthur, H.V. (2019, March). Corporate America's New Flexible Dress Code Is Indicative of A Trend Toward Employee Empowerment. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/hvmacarthur/2019/03/08/corporate-americas-new-flexible-dress-code-is-indicative-of-a-trend-toward-employee-empowerment/#750d62d4221e>
- Marcus, J. (1992). *A World of Difference. Islam and Gender Hierarchy in Turkey*. Zed.

- Mahdavi, S. (2009). *Passionate Uprisings: Iran's Sexual Revolution*. Stanford University Press.
- McCloud, A. B. (2006). *Transnational Muslims in American Society*. University Press of Florida.
- Moscovici, S. (1963). Attitudes and Opinions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 14(1), 231-260.
- Moscovici, S. (1988). Notes towards a description of social representations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18, 211–250.
- Mossière, G. (2012). Modesty and Style in Islamic Attire: Refashioning Muslim Garments in a Western Context. *Contemporary Islam* 6(2), 115-34.
- Niven-Phillips, L. (2018, January). Why Amena Khan Is A Perfect For L'Oréal Paris's New Hair Campaign. *Vogue*. <https://www.vogue.co.uk/article/loreal-paris-elvive-campaign-amena-khan>
- Rahman, O., B. Fung, and A. Yeo. (2016). Exploring the Meanings of Hijab through Online Comments in Canada. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 45(3), 1-19.
- Rateau, P., P. Moliner, J.C. Fabrice & P. Moliner (2012). Social Representation Theory. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 477-498.
- Rodulfo, K. (2017, April). Why Over 150 Million Watch These Hijabi Beauty Influencers." *Elle*. <https://www.elle.com/beauty/a44241/hijabi-beauty-influencers/>

- Rodulfo, K. (2018, February). 16 Black Muslim Beauty Bloggers You Need to Follow on Instagram.” *Popsugar*. <https://www.popsugar.com/beauty/photo-gallery/44437385/embed/44437414/Manal-Chinutay-chinutay>
- Said, E. W. (2003). *Orientalism*. Vintage Books.
- Said-Moorhouse, L. (2018, September). Burkini Ban in Nice Overturned by French Court. *CNN*. <https://www.cnn.com/2016/09/02/europe/france-burkini-ban/index.html>
- Sartawi, M. (2015). Exploring stability and change through social representations: Towards an understanding of religious communities. In G. Sammut, E. Andreouli, G. Gaskell, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Social Representations* (pp. 341-357). Cambridge University Press.
- Strubel, Jessica. (2012). Get your Gele: Nigerian dress, diasporic identity, and translocalism. *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 4(9), 36-53.
- Simmel, G. (1957). Fashion. *American Journal of Sociology*, 62(6), 541-558.
- Skin. (2018). *Habiba Da Silva*. <https://habibadasilva.com/collections/skin>
- Smith, C. (2014, August). Here’s Why Instagram’s Demographics Are So Attractive To Brands.” *Business Insider*. <https://www.businessinsider.com/instagram-demographics-2013-12>
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (p. 273–285). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Synnott, A. (1993). *Thee Body Social. Symbolism, Self and Society*. Routledge.
- Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories*. Cambridge University Press.

- Tarlo, Emma. (2010). *Visibly Muslim: Fashion, Politics, Faith*. Berg.
- Timotijevic, L., Breakwell, G., & Chryssochoou, X. (2000). Migration and threat to identity. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 10(5), 355-372.
- The Nike Pro Hijab Goes Global. (2017, December). *Nike News*.  
<https://news.nike.com/news/nike-pro-hijab>
- Torkia, Dina. (2018, August). Dina Torkia on Perfecting the Art of Modesty Dressing. *Vogue UK*. <https://www.vogue.co.uk/article/dina-torkia-muslim-fashion-blogger-modesty-dressing>
- Torkia, Dina. (2018). *Modestly*. Penguin Random House.
- Torkia, Dina. (2018, November). Your Average Muslim | Full Documentary. *YouTube*.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f14GtLR7O0Y>
- Tully-McManus, Katherine. (2018, November). After 181 Years of No Hats in Congress, Dems Eye Exception for Religious Garb. *Roll Call*.  
[https://www.rollcall.com/news/politics/hats-congress-religious-garb-exception?fbclid=IwAR1x2SV2-PDExEsEt6YzdB9NxOoo\\_hxz2Aq6CJsMAWXGKkO5AUJtAa9vyjo](https://www.rollcall.com/news/politics/hats-congress-religious-garb-exception?fbclid=IwAR1x2SV2-PDExEsEt6YzdB9NxOoo_hxz2Aq6CJsMAWXGKkO5AUJtAa9vyjo)
- Pfluger-Schindlbeck, I. (2006). On the Symbolism of Hair in Islamic Societies: An Analysis of Approaches. *Anthropology of the Middle East*, 1(2), 72-88.
- Pruitt, S. L. (2016, September). This All-Hijab Runway Show Just Made Fashion Week History.” *Oxygen*. <https://www.oxygen.com/very-real/this-all-hijab-runway-show-just-made-fashion-week-history>
- Yaeger, Lynn. (2018, September). How This Sudanese-American YouTube Star Uses Makeup to Explore Her Muslim Identity. *Vogue*.

<https://www.vogue.com/article/vogue-100-shahd-batal-hijab-beauty-los-angeles-california>

Wearing, M. (2011) Preface. in Wearing, M. (Eds.) *Social Identity*. Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

Zhou, L. (2015, October). The Sexism of School Dress Codes. *The Atlantic*.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/10/school-dress-codes-are-problematic/410962/>